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FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5250  
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 002884

SIPDIS

JUSTICE FOR ODAG:JJONES, CRM:BSWARTZ, OPDAT:ANORMAN,  
ICITAP:TBARTLETT, ATF: WJHOOVER  
STATE FOR INL/I, NEA/I

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/28/2019  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [PINS](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PNAT](#) [KCRM](#) [KJUS](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: BAGHDAD BOMBINGS: INVESTIGATION CONTINUES AS MOJ,  
HJC CONTINUE TO WORK

REF: A. BAGHDAD 2814  
[B](#). BAGHDAD 2877  
[C](#). BAGHDAD 2883

Classified By: DCM Robert Ford for Reasons: 1.4 (B and D)

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[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: In the wake of the October 25 car bombings at several key GOI buildings, Embassy law enforcement personnel have visited both sites and are working with MOI investigators. Despite heavy damage, the MOJ and Higher Judicial Council (HJC) have resumed partial operations both at the headquarters and at satellite facilities. Contrary to MOI reports indicating that 93 people were killed and 641 injured, Embassy law enforcement personnel assess that the true death toll may be much higher; the media has widely reported 155 dead. Embassy is working with MOJ and HJC to determine areas where the U.S. can provide assistance. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (SBU) At approximately 1030 on October 25, 2009, two vehicle borne improvised explosive devices (VBIED) were detonated 1-2 minutes apart outside the MOJ and Baghdad Provincial Council buildings. (NOTE: The Ministry of Justice building also houses the Higher Judicial Council (HJC), which supervises the federal judiciary. The Baghdad Provincial Council and Baghdad Governorate share a building. END NOTE). Both facilities were heavily damaged, as was the Ministry of Municipalities and Public works (MMPW), located across the street from MOJ.

U.S. Explosives Experts On Scene

[1](#)3. (C) In the evening of October 25, Embassy ATF Attache and Task Force Troy,s Combined Explosives Exploitation Cell (CEXC), comprised of explosives experts from ATF, DOD, and FBI, visited both attack sites after obtaining MOI permission. The team collected forensic evidence from areas of the blast crater and surrounding walls, and examined vehicles. On October 26, Embassy ATF agents and acting FBI Legat revisited the bombing sites during daylight hours to further assess the damage, communicate with MOI investigators, and collect additional forensic evidence. As is frequently the case in Iraq, aggressive GOI clean-up and normalization efforts compromised the evidentiary integrity of the blast sites. Although MOI should have the lead for such investigations, MOI and MOD do not appear to be coordinating efforts effectively. Embassy ATF agents report that MOI representatives were completely absent from the MOJ site on the night of the bombing.

MOJ, HJC Resume Limited Operations

[1](#)4. (SBU) Minister of Justice Dara Noor Al-Deen Ba,ha Al Deen

cut short his official Washington visit to return to Iraq; his delegation remained in Washington to complete their consultations with USG officials. Deputy Justice Minister Posho Ibrahim, whose office was completely destroyed in the attack, has set up temporary operations in the building,s lobby. Posho is in constant communication with Embassy,s MOJ Senior Advisor and has reported that roughly 20 employees died in the attack, with over 100 injured. The MOJ,s two largest functions, the Iraqi Corrections Service (ICS) and the Real Estate Registry Office (RERO), are largely decentralized in offices and facilities across Iraq and were not physically affected by the bombings.

15. (C) HJC Senior Director General for Administration Yussuf Haddad told us October 27 that of the 400 HJC staff in the MOJ building, 25 were killed, 25 are missing, and roughly 100 QMOJ building, 25 were killed, 25 are missing, and roughly 100 are injured. All HJC senior staff are accounted for and survived the bombing. While the HJC continues to operate in the building on limited power provided by a shared generator, some staff have moved to appellate court offices throughout Baghdad. Chief Justice and HJC President Medhat Al-Mahmoud is in Australia attending a judicial education conference. He remains in regular contact with HJC leadership and will return to Baghdad on October 30.

16. (C) Haddad reported that building security is inadequate. HJC Facilities Protection Services (FPS) shot off over 150 rounds the night of October 26 to disperse a large group of looters. HJC has directed 80 additional FPS guards to the building from other locations. Due to earlier budget cuts, the HJC does not have any finances available for reconstruction and will request emergency funding from the

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Prime Minister,s Office. INL is working with the HJC to determine areas where the Embassy can assist (SEPTEL).

Comment

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17. (SBU) In contrast to the August 19 MFA and MOF bombings, the GOI has been receptive to U.S. offers of support and has allowed us immediate access to the bombing sites. Post will monitor GOI investigations with an eye to assessing whether any progress in investigative procedures has been made since August 19. While the MOJ and HJC continue to operate, the bombing has significantly hampered operations. The Embassy is determining what material assistance is available to help the affected Iraqi agencies resume critical functions (SEPTEL).  
HILL